

31 July 1957

MEMORANDUM FOR: DIRECTOR, CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

SUBJECT : Inspector General's Survey of the Technical Services Staff, April 1957

1. My report to you dated 22 April 1957 expressed my considered views as to what had been accomplished by TSS in its First Five Years. I had not intended to make any separate comments on the IG's Report, but since you have asked me to do so, I submit the following general observations apart from the DD/P's detailed comments which will come to you via the usual channels.

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2. Although its findings may be useful in some aspects of TSS activities, when discussing the TSS Research and Development effort the report contains such serious errors in computation and classification that many of the conclusions drawn are questionable. For example, as pointed out in detail in the DD/P reply, the sum obligated for agent-type clandestine operations alone is nearer [REDACTED] than the [REDACTED] reported by the inspector. An error of this order cannot support a valid conclusion.

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3. The report gives the impression that the result of the R&D effort does not justify its cost. This is not borne out by the record. In four and one half years TSS has completed some 598 items, systems or techniques, with some 229 additional items, systems or techniques carried through the prototype stage at a total cost of about [REDACTED]. Not all of these have been used operationally for reasons of policy but they are available if and when required to meet the varying needs of the Agency under the presently unpredictable world conditions.

4. Apart from such direct contributions, a very considerable technical asset has been created for the Agency. The essential ground work has been laid. Important capabilities have been created, and a group of competent and dedicated people now apply current scientific and technological knowledge to our peculiar requirements.

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5. Whether or not the research effort can be improved by the appointment of a Senior Research Administrator at the Deputy level is a difficult question to decide. Experience has shown that a coordinator without direct responsibility seldom produces the results hoped for. It seems to me, therefore, that this move would be workable only if such a Deputy were in actual charge of the entire R&D effort with full responsibility for this program as well as the authority to dictate it. This would, of necessity, merge the R&D parts of COMMO, TSS and other components. Such an arrangement would involve considerable reorganization of the Agency without assurance of benefit since centralization and regimentation do not, in themselves, improve the quality of scientific work.

6. As for the inherent advantage of a single or a multiplicity of scientific advisory boards, -- the number is not important. Their primary purpose is to bring the best scientific talent of the country to bear on our highly complicated and diversified problems. Actually, the present three Boards serve three different components of the Agency, but their functions do not overlap. It seems probable that if one over-all Board were established, the three present Boards would probably reappear as panels performing the same functions, but perhaps with less talented and distinguished members. The essential thing is to keep high calibre people interested in our problems.

7. We are all working toward the same objective, -- to improve the operational capabilities of the Agency. TSS has made important contributions to that end and it can make many more. After five years of intimate contact with the organization its basic needs are, in my opinion, as follows:

a. Firsthand representation at the policy and planning level to maintain an objective program and to make certain that the technical capabilities and limitations of the Agency are understood and utilized in planning and execution.

b. An adequate field force of trained technicians to insure early and efficient use of new equipment and methods, and above all, to increase operational reliability.

c. Some practical way to eliminate mediocre personnel to make way for more talented replacements.

d. A technical staff consistent with expanding Agency needs.

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e. Greater utilization of existing capabilities of TSS.

8. In summary, I find the inspectors assessment appears overly occupied with a microscopic examination of detail and lacks sufficient appreciation of what has been accomplished.

9. It would be unwise to belittle the value of the work done and to emphasize only the shortcomings which are inevitably associated with the development of an organization of this character. An expert understanding of both is required to evaluate past performance and serve as a guide for the future.



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